



BULLDOG BARKS

By BILL HARTSELL

It can never be truthfully said that the Bulldogs didn't earn the Western North Carolina High School Activities Association basketball championship which they brought home with them to Albemarle High this season in the form of a big gold basketball trophy. For the past three years Coach Frazier and his boys have had this championship in their reach but what happened?

At the close of the 1963-64 basketball season, Coach Frazier led his team to the North-South Piedmont Tourney Championship staged in the North Rowan High Gymnasium, but lost their chance at the WNCHSAA championship in the Association finals, being defeated by Rutherfordton-Spindale.

Again in 1964-65 the Bulldogs fought a winning campaign, and captured the North-South Tourney Championship for a second time earning their way to the Association finals. Everyone was really excited, here we were getting another chance to be the champs! The Bulldogs were off to Marion for the big game followed by several busloads of enthusiastic boosters. But what happened? Again we finished runner-up. This time to a talented squad from Hickory.

The story changed its ending, however, during the 1965-66 hardwood season. After losing their first two conference games, the Bulldogs found a winning groove and must have made up their minds they liked it, for somehow they managed to stay in it. Not only did they become co-champions of the South Piedmont Conference, but went on to win the North-South Piedmont Tournament for the third straight time. This time there was no stopping them, as Coach Frazier led his chargers to the championship of the Western North Carolina High School Activities Association with a sparkling victory over the Valdese Tigers in the Bullock Gymnasium in Kannapolis.

The team that won Coach Frazier his championship was by no means an ordinary basketball team. In the first place, they were Bulldogs, but perhaps most outstanding about this team was that each of the five starters were seniors who had helped their teams get so close to the championship the previous two years, only to somehow lose out in the end. Those boys were co-captains Tommy Smith and David Smith, Bobby Overcash, Tom Webb, and Bob Townsend. The only other senior on the squad was Bill Trivette. Other Bulldogs who probably hope to follow in the seniors footsteps are Mark Cain, Mark Mabry, and John Auten, juniors; and Ricky Russell, Billy Howell, Johnny Little, Jimmy Hathcock, and Jimmy Harwood, sophomores.

The track team under the leadership of Coach Frazier and Coach Cain participated in its first meet, March 25. Both Coach White's baseballers and Coach Gibbs' golfers have also opened their 1966 seasons. Coach Tyson's tennis team is scheduled for its first match around the middle of April.

Whenever we get a chance, let's go out and support our teams in these spring sports.

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Bowers, Stonestreet No. 1 In WNCHSAA

Benny Bowers, wrestling in the 106-pound weight division, and Robert Stonestreet, in the 98-pound class, won individual championships for Coach Gibbs' Bulldogs in the Western North Carolina High School Activities Association Wrestling Tournament staged in the Watauga High Gymnasium at Boone, February 25-26.

Wade Hatley and "Rip" Furr placed second in the 147-pound weight class and the 154-pound division.

These four boys scored 50 of the 54 points earned by the Bulldogs among the 14 competing schools. Steve Brown got two points for the Bulldogs, with Keith Wolf and Mike Waller each getting one point.

Although the wrestling tournament is more of an individual nature, team scores are tabulated. This is how the 14 squads finished:

Statesville, 75 points; Watauga, 69; North Rowan, 68; Troutman, 61; Mooresville, 55; Albemarle, 54; Kannapolis, 34; East Rowan,

31; West Rowan, 27; Thomasville, 16; Asheboro, 10; Wilkes-Central, 9; South Rowan, 7; and Lenoir, 3.

In regular season action, the Bulldogs downed three teams that had a larger point total in the tournament than they did, proving that when 14 schools have representatives in a tournament, the points are more spread out in the various weight divisions.

Overall, Coach Gibbs guided his Bulldogs through a season of 20 wins, compared to only two losses, the best record ever compiled by a wrestling team here at ASHS. This was also the best performance by the Bulldogs in a WNCHSAA Tournament. Last year, Coach Gibbs' team finished sixth in the tourney with a total of 31 points.



Coach Jack White (lower right) looks over his players during a recent practice session as a ground ball in the infield causes much excitement.

Tennis Practice Under Way

Coach Tyson opened tennis practice in the boys' division March 7, with 15 boys trying out for the team. Girls' practice started March 15 with 17 girls slated for practice. Conditioning and development were the goals of the first week while following sessions dealt with perfecting tennis skills.

Boys who are in practice are Charles Daniel, Steve Kendrick, Chuck Smith, Bruce Smith, David Mills, William Sherrill, Ralph Burleson, Frank Huneycutt, Mike Peeler, Jim Holden, Mark Cook, Benny Bowers, Bill Trivette, Doug Brown, and David Smith.

Girls who are engaged in practice are Cynthia Freeman, Barbara Smith, Nancy Walker, Wendy Barry, Alberta Doby, Ruth Howell, Doris Dorsey, Linda Lucas, Penny Furr, Debbie Lander, Melanie Morehead, Dianna Spense, Sally Watkins, Jo Talbert, Anne Ayers, Sandra Cranford, and Cynthia Noah.

Ten matches are slated for the boys, the first to be in Asheboro April 7. The girls have six prospective matches so far, but the dates for these are incomplete.

Baseball Season Opens

Coach White began initiating his prospective baseballers February 15 with a week of classroom study, followed by several weeks of on-the-field practice.

The boys who participated in these practice sessions were Ricky Burleson, Andy Cotton, Thomas Fields, Tim Furr, Jimmy Gantt, Walter Harkey, Elton Hartley, Johnny Hartsell, Tony Hedrick, Billy Hendrick, Steve Hicks, David Kirk, J. R. Laton, Johnny Little, Lanny Lowder, Mark Mabry, David Rothwell, Ricky Russell, Edwin Sides, Tommy Smith, Robert Swanner, David Taylor, Jimmy Taylor, Cam West, Tony Whitley, and Billy Wilhelm.

The first baseball game of the season was played in the local stadium March 29 against Asheboro. Scheduled matches are April 1, Statesville—there; April 5, Thomasville—there; April 12, Concord here; April 15, Kannapolis—there; April 19, South Rowan—here; April 22, Asheboro—there; April 26, Statesville—here; April 29, Thomasville—here.

... And They're Off

Under the direction of Coach Ken Frazier and Coach Bill Cain, track practice has begun. These 33 tracksters have a new look this year as they are clad in blue sweat shirts with white lettering. Other new equipment has also been acquired. This list includes new hurdles, uniforms, discs, shot-puts, and pits of various kinds filled with saw dust for the field events.

Albemarle's first meet is March 25 at Kannapolis with 3 other schools participating. The next meet is April 1 at North Rowan with Mooresville, Statesville, Troutman, Valdese, and Wildes Central participating. The final regulation season meet is at Kannapolis with Concord, Mooresville, Thomasville and Troutman in contention. The Conference track meet will be held on the 29th of April.

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